



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 6 December 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
6 DECEMBER 1967

1. Uruguay

President Gestido died suddenly this morning of a heart attack. His Vice President, Jorge Pacheco Areco, was sworn in as President three hours later.

The new President is likely to have even more trouble than Gestido in controlling the rival political factions of the government party. This will affect his ability to sustain the movement that just recently got under way toward solution of the country's basic economic problems.

2. Cyprus

The crisis will not die out easily. It flared up on the verbal level yesterday over conflicting Greek-Turkish views on how Greek troop evacuation can be verified. Athens flatly refuses to permit observation by the UN Peace Force.

Back in Ankara, Turkish leaders have been sticking to their tough line on the whole Cyprus question. Turkey, they say, will not let itself be bargained out of its right to intervene in Cyprus. Moreover, there is little chance that Ankara will even consider Makarios' idea that troop evacuation should now be extended to the "legal" Greek and Turkish troop contingents. Ankara is not about to leave its Turkish kinsmen in Cyprus to the tender mercies of the Cypriot government.

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3. South Vietnam

[redacted] although the rumblings among the senior generals are likely to quiet down soon, a "feeling of political uneasiness" remains with these people, and this could lead to new crises in the future.

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4. Common Market

Wilson is leaving no doubt in anyone's mind about his determination to press on for an early answer to Britain's application for full Common Market membership. He very much wants the answer to come from the Market's council meeting opening on 18 December.

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This will be the thrust of the British diplomatic effort in the coming week. Whether Bonn will stand up firmly with London is still an open question, and

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5. Japan

Sato's US visit has clearly encouraged him to press harder for a greater Japanese defense effort. In a speech at the opening Diet session yesterday, he stressed that this is important not only for Japan's own security but also as a contribution to stability in Asia. He also referred to the "high expectations" in Southeast Asia regarding Japanese economic assistance.

He pointed out--as he often has since his return from Washington--that greater willingness by Japan to shoulder these burdens will also help speed up the return of the Ryukyus.

6. Communist China

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7. Soviet Union

On Monday, Pravda carried Moscow's first reaction to the President's offer of last weekend to open up the US to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Association. The article treated the announcement as a constructive effort by the US to induce some of its own allies to accept a nonproliferation treaty. Ambassador Thompson doubts, however, that it implies any change in the basic Soviet position.

The Soviets have said nothing yet about the joint US-British proposal in Geneva yesterday calling for inclusion of the President's suggestion in the treaty.

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8. Soviet Union -
Syria

Moscow has made no apparent headway in its effort to bring the Syrian hotheads under control. The communique issued at the end of the Syrian Prime Minister's recent visit failed even to mention the UN Security Council resolution--a clear sign that Moscow was unable to reduce Syrian opposition to it.

Soviet efforts to get Syria to improve working relations with the other "progressive" regimes in Egypt and Iraq have also been unavailing. The Syrians are still dead set against the Arab summit conference scheduled for later this month.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Ho's Health: Hanoi has responded to persistent rumors in the West that Ho is ill by issuing through an authoritative source a statement to the effect that his health is not causing any concern to the Hanoi leadership. This was reported by the French Press Agency correspondent in Hanoi and so far is Hanoi's only reaction to the Western speculation.

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Liberation Front to Open Press Office in France:
The head of the Liberation Front's office in Hanoi, who has been in Denmark attending the Russell War Crimes Tribunal, stated in an interview yesterday that the Front "would set up a press office in Paris." He gave no date for the opening of the installation, nor did he indicate if the French Government has agreed to it. So far, there is no official word from the French [redacted]

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Incidents Involving Chinese Ships: In connection with the recent incident in which Peking claims US aircraft damaged a Chinese ship in a North Vietnamese port, it is worth noting that Peking's ships have long been firing on US aircraft. [redacted]

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Still More on McNamara and His Replacement: A Liberation Front broadcast on 3 December claimed that no matter who the "Washington warmongers" may designate to replace Secretary McNamara, he will be "doomed if the US imperialists still refuse to renounce their aggressive policy." The broadcast claimed that McNamara's "dismissal" indicated that the President no longer felt the Secretary was capable of the job. The statement also pointed out that McNamara had dedicated all his ability to serving the President "like a dog or a horse," but he has not been able to achieve success in the "piratical war" and was thus doomed.

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